

REMARKS

The Official Action mailed July 28, 2004, has been received and its contents carefully noted. This response is filed within three months of the mailing date of the Official Action and therefore is believed to be timely without extension of time. Accordingly, the Applicants respectfully submit that this response is being timely filed.

The Applicants note with appreciation the consideration of the Information Disclosure Statements filed on February 16, 1998, August 10, 1998, November 10, 1998, April 21, 1999, July 17, 2000, January 24, 2001, January 26, 2001, July 31, 2001, May 20, 2002, December 17, 2002, May 10, 2004, and May 21, 2004. A further Information Disclosure Statement was filed October 21, 2004, and consideration of this Information Disclosure Statement is respectfully requested.

Claims 154-186 are pending in the present application, of which claims 154, 159, 164, 169, 175 and 181 are independent. Claims 154, 157, 159, 162, 164 and 167 have been amended to better recite the features of the present invention. The Applicants note with appreciation the allowance of claims 169-186 and the indication of the allowability of claims 155, 157, 158, 160, 162, 163, 165, 167 and 168 (page 3, Paper No. 07262004). For the reasons set forth in detail below, all claims are believed to be in condition for allowance. Favorable reconsideration is requested.

The Official Action rejects claims 154, 156, 159, 161, 164 and 166 as anticipated by U.S. Patent No. 5,344,522 to Yagi et al. The Applicants respectfully submit that an anticipation rejection cannot be maintained against the independent claims of the present application, as amended.

As stated in MPEP § 2131, to establish an anticipation rejection, each and every element as set forth in the claim must be described either expressly or inherently in a single prior art reference. Verdegaal Bros. v. Union Oil Co. of California, 814 F.2d 628, 631, 2 USPQ2d 1051, 1053 (Fed. Cir. 1987).

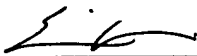
Yagi does not teach all the elements of the independent claims, either explicitly or inherently. Independent claims 154, 159 and 164 have been amended to recite a

laser light elongated in one direction at an irradiation surface. The Applicants respectfully submit that this feature is supported by the specification at least at page 8, lines 16-18, for example. Although Yagi appears to teach a laser beam with a spot diameter of 50 μm (column 1, lines 19-21), Yagi does not teach a laser light elongated in one direction at an irradiation surface, either explicitly or inherently.

Since Yagi does not teach all the elements of the independent claims, either explicitly or inherently, an anticipation rejection cannot be maintained. Accordingly, reconsideration and withdrawal of the rejections under 35 U.S.C. § 102 are in order and respectfully requested.

Should the Examiner believe that anything further would be desirable to place this application in better condition for allowance, the Examiner is invited to contact the undersigned at the telephone number listed below.

Respectfully submitted,



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